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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted at Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) to provide a profile of the characteristics and academic performance of PVCC students in developmental reading and writing courses. Specifically, the study focused on student demographics, performance in developmental courses and college-level English courses, and the relationship between performance in developmental courses and college courses. Data from the transcripts of 191 students who took at least one developmental course during fall 1981 were analyzed. Study findings included the following: (1) 62% of the sample group were under 22 years old, 86% matriculated within 1 year of their target year, and 50% were female; (2) almost 50% came from the three high schools closest to PVCC, and 83% were Virginia residents; (3) blacks accounted for 8% of the total PVCC student population, but 27% of the developmental students; (4) curricular choices remained fairly stable from matriculation to the end of the student's course of study; (5) 41% of the group were in good academic standing at the end of their course of study, 30% were on academic warning status, 13% were on probation, and 13% took no college-level courses; (6) over 50% of the students who took developmental courses eventually took college-level courses; (7) 74% of the students who received a satisfactory final grade in their developmental course went on to take a college-level course, as opposed to 40% of those who received a final grade of "repeat"; and (8) 47% of those who received a satisfactory developmental course grade received an A or B in their first college-level course. (EJV)

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THE DEVELOPMENTAL READING AND WRITING STUDENT:

A SNAPSHOT

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May, 1984

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THE DEVELOPMENTAL READING AND WRITING STUDENT: A SNAPSHOT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to give an historical analysis of the academic performance of PVCC students in developmental reading and writing. The study's questions address issues related to student demographics, performance in developmental course(s) and college level English course(s), and the relationship between performance in developmental courses and college courses.

The sample (N = 191) consisted of students taking developmental English courses during the Fall Quarter of 1981.

Those taking developmental English might be considered a population "at risk" due to their youth (median age less than 22) and the fact that 56% were either on academic warning, academic probation, or had taken no college level courses by the end of their experiences at PVCC.

There is a relationship between success in developmental English and deciding to take a college level English course. Seventy percent who earned a final developmental grade of Satisfactory attempted a college level English course while only 40% with a final grade of Repeat attempted one. None who either withdrew or received an Unsatisfactory developmental grade attempted college English.

Seventy-five percent of those with a final developmental grade of Satisfactory passed their first college English course with an average Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.05. However, 72% of those with a final developmental grade of Repeat also passed college level English with an average GPA of 1.62. Although

those receiving the higher developmental grade are more likely to attempt college English, they are no more likely to pass it than those who received a Repeat grade.

It was important to analyze whether any demographic variables were related to academic performance. There were no effects for age, year of PVCC matriculation, sex, or race. High school graduates do slightly better than GED or non-graduates.

Again, an important relationship exists between developmental performance and final PVCC status. Fifty-four percent who were in "Good Standing", had graduated, or received a certificate had attempted and passed college English while only 28% with a final status of "Academic Warning", "Academic Probation", or "No Quarter Hourse Attempted" had attempted and passed it. If the student fails to pass a developmental course during the first attempt, he or she has only a 37% chance of being in "Good Standing". This drops to 33% if no developmental course is passed during the second attempt.

It is important to note that the relationship between success in developmental English and success in college English is not necessarily causal. Better measures of developmental progress are needed to begin to establish any causal relationships.

Two recommendations are made for consideration. First, reliable and valid measures of academic standing and progress in developmental English should be investigated. Second, an academic review of students not earning a Satisfactory grade by the end of their second quarter of developmental English should be established.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL READING AND WRITING STUDENT: A SNAPSHOT

Introduction

Piedmont Virginia Community College(PVCC), located in Charlottesville, Virginia, seeks to provide quality educational services to the residents of the city and surrounding counties. It offers a variety of degree and certificate programs to enable the students to gain competencies in job and recreation-related skills. Because PVCC has an open-admissions policy, students with a variety of written and reading competencies enroll. The students range from those who have advanced skills and are prepared to do well in college level courses to those who have no high school degree and who have not been to school for several years.

To help those who are not as well prepared for college course work, PVCC offers a program of developmental studies courses in a variety of academic disciplines. According to the the PVCC 1983-84 catalog, "Students enroll in developmental studies courses to extend the basic skills and competencies needed for entry into college level courses and the occupational-technical or university parallel-transfer programs of their choice."

PVCC received funding from the federal government's Title III program for strengthening institutions. One of the activities of the grant was "to design and implement an organizational and program evaluation process for developmental studies which is directed toward measurable educational outcomes." The stated objective was that "the evaluation of

developmental studies programs indicates that they are effective in achieving required student competencies and in reducing attrition." This evaluation was to be accomplished with the cooperation of the PVCC Developmental Studies Task Force and to is enable them to learn how well the students were being prepared. Furthermore, the information is to help them make any needed program modifications.

This researcher had discussions with Dr. Robert Templin, Dean of Instruction, to determine what information about the developmental English program would be most useful to him and the Developmental Task Force. Although one might want to know how well the present students are doing academically and their perceptions of the program, the unfortunate decimation of the developmental faculty through two deaths and and the resignation of a third have caused the present group of developmental students to be so affected by history as to make them somewhat unrepresentative of the typical English developmental studies student. Because of these problems, Dr. Templin felt that a historical analysis of academic progress of a more typical sample of students would be useful to him and the Task Force.

Therefore, the purpose of this report is to analyze the academic history of a recent group of students who took developmental English courses to ascertain how well they have performed in these and other PVCC courses. The information is provided to PVCC administrators to aid their decision-making activities relative to future modifications in developmental English.

In preparing to conduct the study, the author met with Dr.

Robert Templin, Dean of Instruction, and other interested faculty and staff to discover what questions should be asked and what data should be collected. They wanted to know who the developmental students are (demographics) and how well have they done in developmental courses and other college courses. Below is the list of questions prepared by the author to direct the analysis of the data.

1. How many students took a developmental reading or writing course during the 1981-82 academic year?

2. The following questions relate to those who eventually took a college level English course.

   a. How many took a college level English course after receiving a grade of "S" in developmental reading or writing?

   b. How many took a college level English course after receiving a grade below "S" in developmental reading or writing?

   c. How many of each group(a. and b.) passed, did not pass, or withdrew from the college level course?

   d. How many times did each group(a. and b) retake developmental reading or writing course(s)?

   e. Do the two groups(a. and b.) differ on any of the following variables?

      1) Age
      2) Year/Quarter of first matriculation at PVCC
      3) Sex
      4) Race
      5) High School Graduate
      6) Degree or Certificate program entered
      7) Current PVCC status(Graduate, Good Standing, etc.)

   f. How many college level courses did each group(a. and b.) take while they were also taking a developmental reading or writing course? How many of these college level courses were passed?

   g. How many other non-English developmental courses did each group take while they were taking developmental reading or writing course? How many courses were passed?

3. The following questions relate to those students who did not take a college level English course after taking a developmental reading or writing course.

   a. How many received at least one "S" grade?

   b. How many did not receive at least one "S" grade?

   c. How many times did each group(a. and b.) retake either developmental reading or writing before stopping taking developmental English courses?

   d. Do the two groups(a. and b.) differ on any of the following variables?

      1) Age
      2) Year/Quarter of first matriculation at PVCC
      3) Sex
      4) Race
      5) High School Graduate
      6) Degree or Certificate program entered
      7) Current PVCC status(Graduate, Good Standing, etc.)

   e. How many college level courses did each group(a. and b.) take while they were also taking a developmental reading or writing course? How many of these college level courses were passed?

   f. How many other non-English developmental courses did each group take while they were taking developmental reading or writing course? How many courses were passed?

4. The questions below relate to any differences between those students who eventually took a college level English course and passed, those who took one and did not pass, those who took one and dropped out, and those who did not take a college level English course.

   a. Do the groups mentioned above differ on any of the following variables?

      1) Age
      2) Year/Quarter of first matriculation at PVCC
      3) Sex
      4) Race
      5) High School Graduate
      6) Degree or Certificate program entered
      7) Current PVCC status(Graduate, Good Standing, etc.)

   b. Do the groups differ in the number of college level courses taken and passed while they were taking developmental reading or writing?

   c. Do the groups differ in the number of other

developmental courses taken while they were taking developmental reading or writing? Are some groups more likely to be developmental students(take mostly developmental courses) while some other group(s) are composed of developmental course-takers(those who only take a few developmental courses to increase certain skills)?

The next section describes the methodology employed to answer these questions.

Methodology

Data from the transcripts of 191 students who took at least one developmental course during the Fall, 1981 Quarter formed the sample to be analyzed. A major goal in choosing the sample was to pick a quarter close enough to the present to have timely data while also insuring that a complete academic history was gained. It was felt, and later confirmed by the data, that this sample would represent students who matriculated several years before the quarter of interest and who were still enrolled as recently as the Fall of 1983.

Variables reflecting both demographic information and academic performance were gained from the student transcripts and coded onto a coding form(See Appendix A). It was then analyzed on the University of Virginia Control Data Corporation Cyber computer using the Statistical Package For The Social Sciences(SPSS).

The reader should note that percentages in the Results section have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Therefore, some tables will not equal 100% exactly.

Results

The results are divided into two sections. The first, demographics, describes the characteristics of students such as age, race, sex, year of PVCC matriculation. The second, academic performance, analyzes how successful the developmental students have been in developmental and college work. Efforts are made to analyze performance by demographic group to determine whether any demographic and academic trends exist.

Demographics

To better understand what the typical developmental student is like, it is an important first step to analyze the demographic characterstics of the sample. For example, what is their age, when did they matriculate at PVCC, and what is their sex and race? Table 1 gives the number and percentage of some important demographic characteristics.

Table 1

Age, Year Of PVCC Matriculation, Sex, Race, And Current PVCC Status As Of Fall, 1981

Category	Value	Number	Percent
Age	Under 22	118	62
	22-24	22	12
	25-35	35	18
	36-44	12	6
	45+	4	2
Year of PVCC Matriculation	Summer & Fall, 1981	138	72
	1980 to Spring, 1981	26	14
	1978-79	16	8
	1976-77	5	3
	Before 1976	6	3
Sex	Male	95	50
	Female	96	50
Race	White	125	65
	Black	52	27
	Other	14	7

Table 1 indicates that the sample is a young one. In fact, 62% are under 22 years old. Since Dr. Ross reported that the median age of all PVCC students is 27 years, the typical developmental student is younger than the typical PVCC student. Eighty-six percent matriculated within one year of the target year which means that most developmental courses are taken early in the student's course of study. Since PVCC strives to insure early

identification of students needing developmental work, this finding shows that placement occurs shortly after the student matriculates.

There were 50% males and 50% females in the sample. Since PVCC's enrollment is approximately 60% females, there is a disproportionate number of males in developmental studies. Because females tend to score higher on standardized English tests, this figure is not unexpected.

The racial characteristics show a predominance of whites. Blacks, however, although accounting for only 8% of the total PVCC population, are overrepresented in developmental studies because they account for 27% of the sample. The "Other" category is higher than the 2% total PVCC percentage and is probably due to the inclusion in the sample of those who took English As A Second Language

It is important to understand the educational background of the students to know not only what school they came from, but also whether they are primarily high school graduates and how long it has been since they attended high school. Those who are recent graduates may have totally different needs and characteristics from the student returning after a number of years. Table 3 gives the demographic characteristics for most recent high school, whether the student is a high school graduate, and the year of graduation. It continues on the following page.

Table 2

Most Recent High School

Category	Value	Number	Percent	Percent Of Total 1983 PVCC Matriculants
Most Recent High School	Albemarle	29	15	22
	Charlottesville	23	12	13
	W. Albemarle	16	8	13
	Nelson	6	3	5
	Buckingham	7	4	Unknown
	Fluvanna	8	4	6
	Louisa	16	8	4
	William Monroe	3	2	5
TOTAL PVCC REGION		108	56	68
	Other VA High School	28	16	15
	Other State High School	32	17	10
	GED	13	7	Unknown
	No GED	9	5	Unknown

Table 2 Continued

High School Graduate Status and Year of High School Graduation

Category	Value	Number	Percent
High School Graduate	Yes	160	85
	GED	13	7
	No	9	8
Year of High School Graduation or GED	1981	69	40
	1978-1980	25	15
	1975-1977	10	6
	1964-1974	17	10
	Before 1964	4	2
	Missing	46	27

As one might expect, the majority of students come from within the region primarily served by the college. Almost 50% come from the three closest high schools--Albemarle, Charlottesville, and Western Albemarle. Eighty-three percent are from Virginia.

The sample is overwhelmingly high school graduates. Only 8% did not have a high school or GED degree. This means that the students should have met some academic standards in order to graduate.

It is interesting to note that at least 40% entered PVCC immediately after graduating from high school. At least 18%, however, had been out of school for 4 years. Although the highest percentage are recent graduates. a sizable number had been out of school for a few years. The 27% missing figure represents those whose graduation date was not on the history

file.

Table 3 gives the entering and final curricular or non-curricular choices of students.

Table 3

Initial And Final PVCC Academic Program

Program	Initial Number	Initial Percent	Final Number	Final Percent
Non-Curricular	40	22	15	9
Nursing and Health Tech	4	2	6	4
Community & Soc Serv	1	.5	1	.5
Accounting	4	2	5	3
Data Processing	17	9	22	12
Business Admin & Management	20	11	25	13
Clerical & Secretar-ial	10	5	12	7
Law & Police Science	7	4	6	4
Fine Arts	1	.5	2	1
Education	3	2	6	3
Child Care	3	2	5	3
Liberal Arts	3	2	4	2
General Studies	51	27	50	26
Science	13	7	12	6
Auto Mechanics	1	.5	1	.5
Drafting & Design	6	4	6	4
Electronics	7	4	11	6

Table 3 shows that curricular choices remain fairly stable from matriculation to the end of the course of study. While the

non-curricular percentage dropped as one would expect as students decide on a more specific program, the business-oriented decisions rose. Many of the students did not change because they did not attend PVCC for more than a few quarters.

This completes the demographic portion of the results. The typical developmental student is young, has matriculated recently at PVCC, is from the PVCC service region, is a high school graduate, and has graduated fairly recently from high school.

Academic Performance

This part of the results analyzes the academic performance of the developmental students. The tables relate to the questions which guided the research.

Students took developmental courses from one to at least four quarters. At the end of their course of study, they have either graduated, are in good standing, are on academic warning or probation, or have not received any college level credit. Although the final PVCC status is a gross measure of achievement, it is probably the best overall measure available. According to Dr. Ross, it is conservative because some students would be in good standing after their first quarter even if they had made minimal progress. One can safely state that those whose status is "Warning", "Probation", or "No Quarter Hours Attempted" have had academic difficulties. Attempts will be made to relate PVCC status to other performance indicators such as grades in developmental courses to determine if any important trends exist.

Table 4 shows the final PVCC status for the students who took developmental courses.

Table 4

Final Academic Status For Developmental Students

Category	Value	Number	Percent
Current Status	Graduate	2	1
	Certificate	4	2
	Good Standing	79	41
	Warning	57	30
	Probation	25	13
	No Quarter Hours	24	13

While those in good standing account for the highest percentage of students, 56% are either on academic warning, academic probation, or took no college level courses. While 44% seem to have made academic progress, 56% have experienced difficulties. It is especially noteworthy that 13% never progressed beyond the developmental stage.

Students quite often needed to repeat a course to receive a Satisfactory grade. Tables 5 and 6 show the number of times each course was taken by those who eventually attempted college level English and did not attempt it.

Table 5

Number of Times Students Took Each Developmental Studies Course By Those Who Also Took A College Level English Course

Course	Number Taking Course	Times Course Taken 1	2	3	4	Average Times Taken
Verbal Studies	76	35(46)	26(34)	10(13)	5(7)	1.80
Spelling	1	1(100)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1.00
Second Lang.	3	3(100)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1.00
Reading	72	53(74)	16(22)	2(3)	1(1)	1.32

Table 6

Number of Times Students Took Each Developmental Studies Course By Those Who Did Not Attempt A College Level English Course

Course	Number Taking Course	Times Course Taken 1	2	3	4	Average Times Taken
Verbal Studies	66	37(56)	10(15)	10(15)	9(14)	1.86
Spelling	2	2(100)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1.00
Second Lang	7	2(29)	5(71)	0(0)	0(0)	1.71
Reading	50	32(64)	6(12)	6(12)	6(12)	1.72

Comparing the two tables, the only apparent difference is that those who did not take a college level course took Reading more times than those who did take college English. The vast majority do not take a course more than two times.

Since a primary objective of developmental English courses is to prepare students to successfully complete a college level English course, the next several tables document the percentage

of students who take college level English after completing a developmental course.

Table 6 gives the number of students taking each developmental course and the percentage who took or did not take a college level course.

Table 6

Number Of Students Taking Developmental Studies Courses By The Number Who Eventually Took Or Did Not Take A College Level English Course

Course	N	College English	%	No College English	%	Percent Of Total Taking Developmental Course
Verbal Studies(01)	142	76	54	66	47	74
Spelling(02)	3	1	33	2	67	2
Second Language(05)	10	3	30	7	70	5
Reading(08)	122	72	60	50	40	64

As would be expected, a majority took either Verbal Studies(01) or Reading(02). Over half who took developmental courses eventually took a college level course.

The most important question, however, is not whether the students eventually took a college level English course, but how well did they perform in that course. Also, is there a relationship between the final grade received in a developmental course and the likelihood of taking a college level course? Are students who complete developmental courses with a feeling of success more likely to take a college level course? Tables 7a and 7b look at this relationship. Table 7a breaks down the

grades received and the percentage taking a college level course by the particular course taken.

Table 7a *

Final Grade Received In Developmental Studies Courses
By The Number Who Eventually Took Or Did Not Take
A First College Level English Course (Percentages Are For Rows)

Course	Grade	College English	%	No College English	%	Total
Verbal Studied	S	46	79	12	21	58
	R	7	44	9	56	16
	W	0	0	15	100	15
	U	0	0	6	100	6
Second Language	S	0	0	2	100	2
	R	0	0	2	100	2
Reading	S	38	70	16	30	54
	R	14	41	20	59	34
	W	0	0	3	100	3
	U	0	0	1	100	1

* S = Satisfactory
R = Repeat
W = Withdraw
U = Unsatisfactory

In both Verbal Studies and Reading, those who receive a final grade of Satisfactory are much more likely to take a college level course.

Table 7b condenses Table 7a to show the relationship between final developmental grade and the decision to take a college level English course. For example, the Satisfactory grades of those eventually attempting college English in Verbal Studies (N = 46), English As A Second Language (N = 0), and Reading

Improvement (N = 38), when added together, equal the total final Satisfactory grades in Table 7b of those who eventually took college English (N = 84).

Table 7b

Final Developmental Studies Grade By The Number Who Eventually Took A College Level Course

Final DS Grade	Took College English	%	No College English	%	Total
S	84	74	30	26	114
R	21	40	31	60	52
W	0	0	18	100	18
U	0	0	7	100	7

Table 7b clearly shows the relationship between success in developmental courses and the taking of a college level course. Seventy-four percent who received a Satisfactory final developmental grade go on to take a college course as opposed to only 40% who received a final grade of Repeat. Of the 25 who either withdrew or received an Unsatisfactory, none took a college course. Those who struggle in developmental English are not very likely to attempt a college course.

The next obvious question is how do those students who take a college level English course perform in it. As evidenced by their grades, do they seem to be well prepared for the course? Since this is one of the major reasons for taking a developmental course, the answer to this question is of primary importance. Tables 8a and 8b compare grades received in a developmental course with grade received in a college level course. Table 8b,

like 7b, condenses the data from 8a.

Table 8a

Grade In First College Level English Course
By Grade In Final Developmental Studies Course
(Percentages in Parentheses)

Course	DS Grade	N	English Grade A	B	C	D	F	W+I+X
Verbal Studies	S	46	5(11)	14(30)	10(22)	3(7)	5(11)	9(20)
	R	7	0(0)	0(0)	5(71)	0(0)	2(29)	0(0)
Reading	S	38	1(3)	20(53)	9(24)	1(3)	5(13)	2(5)
	R	14	1(7)	3(21)	5(38)	1(7)	1(7)	3(21)

In both Verbal Studies and Reading, the likelihood of receiving a passing grade in a college course is about 70%. Those who received Satisfactory grade in developmental tend to receive higher college level grades higher than those who received final grades of Repeat.

Table 8b

Grade In First College English Course By Final
Developmental Studies Grade
(Percentages Are In Parentheses)

Final DS Grade	English Grade A	B	C	D	F	W	Total	%
S	6(7)	34(40)	19(23)	4(5)	10(12)	11(13)	84	80
R	1(5)	3(14)	10(48)	1(5)	3(14)	3(14)	21	20

Forty-seven of those who received a Satisfactory developmental grade received either an A or B in their first course while only 19% of those receiving a final developmental grade of Repeat received an A or B. An English faculty member indicated that students who are failing often withdraw from a course. Counting

those who withdrew as more than likely failing, the grade point of average of those receiving a final developmental grade of Satisfactory was 2.05 as opposed to 1.62 for those receiving a final Repeat. This shows a positive relationship between developmental grade and college level grade.

Table 9 compares the percentage of developmental students receiving each college level grade with all students taking college level English in the Fall of 1983.

Table 9

Grade Distributions By Percentages In College Level English For Developmental Students And All Students. Total Percentages Are For Fall, 1983 English Courses

Category	Grade A	B	C	D	F	I+X+W
Developmental	6	35	28	5	12	13
All Students	21	32	17	3	10	17

The developmental student passes college level courses at about the same rate as all students. Basing these percentages on a hypothetical sample of 100, the developmental GPA is 1.9 as opposed to 2.17 for all students. The total students' average is slightly higher than the developmental students.

Do Tables 8a, 8b, and 9 indicate that the developmental student who successfully completes a developmental course benefitted from developmental studies? Unfortunately, this cannot be answered with the available information. While it is clear that those receiving a higher developmental grade do better in college level courses, it may be that they would have passed

it without the developmental course. It may also mean that those receiving a Satisfactory developmental grade only needed a small amount of review while the remaining students needed extensive help or were simply incapable of gaining sufficient skills to pass college level work. Without adequate pre and post measures of student skill levels, it is impossible to adequately assess the advantages of developmental English.

Data was collected to determine how many attempted at least 2 college level English courses. A comparison of final developmental grade with college grade are given in Tables 10a and 10b.

Table 10a

Grade In Second College Level English Course
By Grade In Final Developmental Studies Course
Percentages Are In Parentheses

Course	DS Grade	N	English Grade A	B	C	D	F	W+I+X
Verbal Studies	S	35	7(20)	6(17)	9(26)	4(11)	5(14)	4(11)
	R	2	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1(50)	1(50)
Reading	S	27	3(11)	8(30)	9(33)	1(4)	0(0)	6(22)
	R	8	0(0)	2(24)	3(38)	0(0)	2(25)	1(13)

Table 10b

Grade In Final Developmental Studies Course
By Grade In Second College English Course
Percentages Are In Parentheses

Final DS Grade	English Grade A	B	C	D	F	W	Total	%
S	10(16)	14(23)	18(29)	5(8)	5(8)	10(16)	62	86
R	0(0)	2(20)	3(30)	0(0)	3(30)	2(20)	10	14

Seventy-four percent of those who attempted one college level course and received a Satisfactory developmental grade attempted a second college course as opposed to only 48% of those who received a Repeat grade and attempted one college course. The average GPA of those with Satisfactory was 1.98 as compared with 1.20 for those with a Repeat grade.

One of the study's questions addressed a possible relationship between the demographic variables and whether a student attempted a college English course and passed, did not pass, withdrew, or did not attempt it. The relationship of age, year of PVCC matriculation, sex, race, high school graduate status, and current PVCC status with academic performance are explored in Table 11 on the following page 2 pages.

Table 11

Demographic Characteristics Of Those Who Took A First College Level English Course And Passed, Did Not Pass, Or Withdrew And Those Who Did Not Take A College Level Course Percentages Are In Parentheses

Characteristic	Value	Passed Course	Did Not Pass	Withdrew	No English Course
Age	Under 22	48(41)	10(9)	6(5)	54(46)
	22-24	10(46)	2(9)	3(14)	7(32)
	25-35	17(49)	1(3)	4(11)	13(37)
	36-44	3(27)	0(0)	0(0)	8(73)
	45+	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	4(0)
Year of PVCC Matriculation	1980-81	68(42)	10(6)	11(7)	75(46)
	1978-79	5(28)	3(17)	2(11)	8(44)
	1976-77	3(60)	0(0)	0(0)	2(40)
	Before 1976	2(50)	0(0)	1(25)	1(25)
Sex	Male	39(41)	4(4)	10(11)	42(44)
	Female	39(41)	9(9)	4(4)	44(46)
Race	White	53(42)	9(7)	11(9)	52(42)
	Black	23(44)	3(6)	2(4)	24(46)
	Other	2(14)	1(7)	1(7)	10(71)
High School Graduate	Yes	68(43)	12(8)	12(8)	68(43)
	GED	4(36)	0(0)	1(9)	6(55)
	No	5(33)	1(7)	0(0)	9(60)

Table 11 Cont.

Characteristic	Value	Passed Course	Did Not Pass	Withdrew	No English Course
Current Status	Graduate	2(100)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
	Certificate	4(100)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
	Good Standing	40(51)	4(5)	6(8)	29(37)
	Warning	26(46)	4(7)	5(9)	22(39)
	Probation	6(24)	5(20)	2(8)	12(48)
	No Quarter Hours	0(0)	0(0)	1(4)	23(96)

The younger student seems no more likely to attempt and pass a college course than the older student. The same holds true for year of PVCC matriculation, sex, and race. The high school graduate is more likely to have taken a college course and passed than the GED or non-GED. A clear relationship exists between final PVCC status and success. Whereas 54% of those who graduated, received a certificate, or are in good standing took a college course and passed, only 30% of those on warning, probation, or with no attempted quarter hours passed. Excluding those on warning, only 12% of students on probation or with no quarter hours passed college English. Those who do well in college English also do well in other courses. The reverse applies to those who do poorly in college English or who do not even attempt it.

Do students from particular high schools tend to be more successful than others. Table 12 compares the success rate in college level English with high school attendance.

Table 12

High School Attended By Performance In College English Course
Percentages Are In Parentheses

School	Passed English	Failed English	Withdrew	No College English
Albemarle	10(35)	3(10)	2(7)	14(48)
Charlottesville	7(30)	1(4)	1(4)	14(61)
W. Albemarle	8(50)	2(13)	1(6)	5(31)
Nelson	4(67)	1(17)	0(0)	1(17)
Buckingham	3(43)	0(0)	1(14)	3(43)
Fluvanna	5(63)	0(0)	1(13)	2(25)
Louisa	11(69)	0(0)	0(0)	5(31)
William Monroe	2(67)	0(0)	0(0)	1(33)
PVCC REGION	50(46)	7(6)	6(6)	45(42)
Other VA High School	10(36)	3(11)	2(7)	13(46)
Other State High School	10(31)	2(6)	4(13)	16(50)
GED	5(38)	0(0)	1(7)	7(54)
No GED	3(33)	1(11)	0(0)	5(55)

No real relationship seems to exist until some groups are added together. Although the number of individuals in the groups are relatively small, the following results are intriguing. Those who come from the immediate area high schools of Albemarle, Charlottesville, and Western Albemarle take college English and pass at a rate of only 37% whereas those from Nelson, Buckingham, Fluvanna, Louisa, and William Monroe have 63% who passed. Fifteen percent of the local group took English and failed while

only 8% of the second group failed. One wonders why those coming from the closest high schools have such a poor rate of success. One possible reason may be that those closest to the college need to expend fewer resources (travel time, gasoline) and do not make as strong a commitment as those who have further to come. The marginal student may be more likely to try to succeed if he or she does not have to make a great commitment. A greater percentage of those come from a shorter distance may be marginal students than those who must come from a greater distance.

An important relationship might be between the number of courses taken and the number passed during the first quarter of developmental studies. Are those who take college English and pass more likely to pass the first developmental course? Do they also tend to pass a higher percentage of other courses than those who do not take an English course? Table 13 addresses these questions.

Table 13

Average Number Of Developmental And College Level Courses Taken And Passed During The First Quarter Of Developmental Reading Or Writing. This Is Shown For Those Who Did Or Did Not Take College Level English. Orientation Course 100 Is Excluded.

	Passed English	Failed English	Withdrew	No College English
Average Number Of Developmental English Courses Taken	1.31	1.46	1.43	1.33
Average Number Of Developmental English Courses Passed	.91	1.11	.80	.57
Average Number Of College Courses Taken	1.71	1.77	1.29	1.18
Average Number Of College Courses Passed	1.62	1.28	.75	.70
Average Number Of Developmental Courses Taken	.28	.08	.29	.35
Average Number Of Developmental Courses Passed	.18	.08	.14	.14
Average Number of Courses Taken	3.30	3.31	3.01	2.86
Average Number Of Courses Passed	2.71	2.47	1.69	1.41
Percentage Passed	.82	.75	.56	.49

Table 13 gives an important finding. Those who take college English tend to take more courses their first quarter of developmental studies than those who do not eventually take a college course. The percentage of total courses passed drops from the 82% who eventually passed college English to 49% for

those who never took college English. Those who do well in developmental courses and are successful in other classes tend to do well early in their college history.

Table 14 follows this same theme. How do those who receive at least one Satisfactory grade perform in subsequent college English courses? Is the grade in developmental English a good predictor of success?

Table 14

Students Receiving And Not Receiving At Least One Grade Of "S" By Developmental Course Taken And College Level English Course Taken Or Not Taken

Course	Grade	N	Passed English	Failed English	Withdrew	No College English
Verbal Studies	S	81	47(58)	6(7)	12(15)	16(20)
	No S	61	7(12)	3(5)	1(2)	50(82)
Reading	S	75	38(51)	9(12)	5(7)	23(31)
	No S	47	15(32)	1(2)	4(9)	27(57)

Those who receive at least on Satisfactory grade do tend to be more successful in college English. Of those who took Verbal Studies, 80% took college English. Seventy-two percent who earned a Satisfactory grade in Verbal Studies passed their first course. Of those who received no Satisfactory grade in Verbal Studies, only 19% took college English. Sixty-four percent with no Satisfactory grade in Verbal Studies passed their first course. Seventy-seven percent of developmental reading students attempted college English. Seventy-seven percent passed. Forty-three percent with no satisfactory Reading grade attempted college English and 75% passed.

Is there a relationship between success in developmental studies and the final PVCC status? Table 15 shows the relationship between those who did and did not receive a Satisfactory grade and PVCC status.

Table 15

Students Receiving At Least One Developmental English "S" Grade Or Not Receiving At Least One Developmental English"S" Grade By Final PVCC Status
Percentages Are For Columns And Are In Parentheses

	Course And Grade			
	Verbal Studies		Reading	
Status	S	No S	S	No S
Graduate	0(0)	0(0)	2(3)	0(0)
Certificate	3(4)	0(0)	3(4)	1(2)
Good Standing	43(53)	21(34)	30(40)	19(40)
Warning	24(30)	18(30)	23(31)	12(25)
Probation	10(12)	9(15)	11(15)	6(13)
No Quarter Hours	1(1)	13(21)	6(8)	9(19)
TOTALS	81(100)	61(100)	75(100)	47(100)

The relationship of success in developmental courses to final PVCC status is unclear. Fifty-seven percent who received at least one Satisfactory grade in Verbal Studies either graduated, received a certificate, or are in good standing. On the other hand, only 47% who received at least one Satisfactory grade in Reading either graduated, received a certificate, or are in good standing.

As the study progressed, another very important question was raised by this researcher. Because it seems that success at PVCC for developmental students is related to early success in

developmental courses, it was decided to analyze the final PVCC status for those who did not pass a developmental course their first quarter. Then the analysis was done for those who did not pass one their first two developmental quarters.

Table 16

PVCC Status For Those Not Receiving At Least One Satisfactory Developmental Grade During Their First Or Their First and Second Developmental Quarters

	Quarter With No Satisfactory Grade			
	First		First & Second	
Status	Number	%	Number	%
Graduate	1	1	0	0
Certificate	3	3	2	3
Good Standing	33	33	22	30
Warning	31	31	22	30
Probation	14	14	11	15
No Quarter Hours	17	17	17	23

Those students who do not receive a Satisfactory grade their first developmental quarter have only a 37% chance of have a good standing status at the end of their PVCC history. Those who do not receive one by the end of their second quarter only have a 33% chance of being at least in good standing. Early success is an obvious indicator of college success. Of those who did not receive a Satisfactory their first two quarters, only 27% eventually took college English. Of those who took it, however, 75% did pass.

This completes the results section. In the conclusion, an attempt will be made to tie together some of the major themes and relate them to the questions facing the Developmental Task Force.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The developmental student is somewhat different from the general college population. While the typical PVCC student is about 27 years old and has been out of school for a few years, the typical developmental English student is under 22 years old, has recently matriculated at PVCC, and is a fairly recent high school graduate. There is also a disproportionate number of males and blacks in the sample. He or she is generally someone who is coming directly from high school or returning after several years and needs skill enhancement. Because of the above characteristics, the developmental student probably requires and receives more special services such as counseling than the typical population.

A major question facing the Developmental Task Force is whether developmental English actually increases skills and makes the student better able to successfully complete in college level work. Unfortunately, this question cannot yet be answered. Although relationships seem to exist between satisfactory performance in developmental courses and success in English courses, one cannot unequivocally say it is due to developmental English. It could be that the student who successfully completed developmental English did not need it in the first place or only needed a few skills while the unsuccessful student had very poor skills which would take a many quarters to master. There are probably some whose skills are so poor that they do not belong at PVCC at all. As shown by the 27% of all students who attempted college English and did not pass, there may be some who needed developmental work and were not identified.

Although one cannot judge the usefullness of developmental English, it would be useful to predict which students are likely to be successful in college work. It seems that those who are successful early (primarily the first quarter) are most likely to be successful at PVCC. Those who do not pass a developmental class by the end of their second developmental quarter have only a 33% chance of being in at least good standing at the end of their PVCC history.

The results of the analyses seem to indicate two recommendations which are offered for discussion and consideration.

1. It is impossible to adequately determine the overall effect of developmental English instruction. While on the one hand it could be instrumental in helping many students to perform successfully in college work, it might also do them no good at all. The actual effects are probably somewhere between these two extremes. One cannot determine its effectiveness, however, without reliable and valid measures of skill mastery both before and after taking the course. The student also has the right to understand his or her deficiencies and how they are to be treated. It would be most useful to the instructors to know what skills each student needs to better individualize the instructional process. An adequate measurement system would enable the student and faculty to determine how much progress has been made each quarter. Therefore, it is recommended that a more systematic method of measuring beginning and end of course

reading and writing skills be investigated. Although this is can be a most difficult area to assess, one might be able to determine the actual benefits received from developmental English if better measures and a control group were available.

2. It is this researcher's concern that a fairly substantial number (as many as one half) of the developmental students are relatively unsuccessful at PVCC. The probability of being successful decreases as the number of unsuccessful developmental courses increases.

PVCC is dedicated to the worthwhile policy of allowing students an opportunity to learn no matter what their present skills are. It cannot, however, expend valuable resources on those who are not benefitting academically. This is why some students are placed on warning, probation, or are expelled. It might be worthwhile for the Task Force to discuss whether developmental students should achieve success in at least one developmental course within a specified period of time. Although two thirds of the students who do fail to earn a satisfactory developmental grade within two quarters are either on academic warning, probation, or have earned no quarter hours, there is still one third who do eventually become successful. The objective is to identify those who probably will be successful. One step might be to require an academic review of those students who have not passed one developmental course after two quarters. Those who show evidence that they might still succeed would be allowed to continue while

those who do not could be counseled to consider other alternatives. In this manner those who are benefitting from PVCC would still be rewarded.

While this completes the report, the data still remains in the computer. If the members of the task force have suggestions for changes or future analyses, they would be welcomed and appreciated. It is hoped that this report has increased the knowledge of those most concerned with the developmental student and that it will enhance the future effectiveness of developmental studies.

Appendix A: Data Coding Form

Last Name_____ SSN_____

CODING PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENTAL STUDIES STUDENTS AT PVCC

This sheet is designed to hold information about developmental studies students at PVCC. The information is described in the left hand column and the actual data is to be placed in the right hand column.

		Code	Card Column
1.	Card Number	1	1
2.	Student Identification Number	_____	2,3,4
3.	Birthdate (Last 2 digits of birth year)	_____	5,6
4.	Year/Quarter when first matriculated at PVCC (Summer=1; Fall=2; Winter=3; Spring=4)	_____	7,8,9
5.	Sex (Male=1, Female=2)	_____	10
6.	Race (White=1, Black=2, Other=3)	_____	11
7.	Last High School Attended	_____	12-17
8.	Date of High School Graduation or GED (Year; Graduate=1; GED=2: Non-Grad=993)	_____	18-20
9.	PVCC Program at Matriculation	_____	21-23
10.	Current or ending PVCC program	_____	24-26
11.	PVCC status as of 12/31/84	_____	27
12.	Number of English and/or developmental courses taken at another post-secondary school	_____	28
13.	Developmental English and College-level courses taken during the same quarter. Only quarters when a developmental English course was taken should be used for the coding.		
	Quarter 1. Year and Quarter	_____	29-31
	Developmental English Course #	_____	32
	Grade Received	_____	33
	Developmental English Course # (If more than one taken)	_____	34
	Grade Received	_____	35

	College-Level Courses Taken This Quarter	_____	36
	Number Passed	_____	37
	Number of other Developmental Studies courses taken this quarter.	_____	38
	Number receiving a grade of "S".	_____	39
Quarter 2.	Year and Quarter	_____	40-42
	Developmental English Course #	_____	43
	Grade Received	_____	44
	Developmental English Course # (If more than one taken)	_____	45
	Grade Received	_____	46
	College-Level Courses Taken This Quarter	_____	47
	Number Passed	_____	48
	Number of other Developmental Studies courses taken this quarter.	_____	49
	Number receiving a grade of "S".	_____	50
Quarter 3.	Year and Quarter	_____	51-53
	Developmental English Course #	_____	54
	Grade Received	_____	55
	Developmental English Course # (If more than one taken)	_____	56
	Grade Received	_____	57
	College-Level Courses Taken This Quarter	_____	58
	Number Passed	_____	59
	Number of other Developmental Studies courses taken this quarter.	_____	60
	Number receiving a grade of "S".	_____	61

Quarter 4.	Year and Quarter	_____	62-64
	Developmental English Course #	_____	65
	Grade Received	_____	66
	Developmental English Course # (If more than one taken)	_____	67
	Grade Received	_____	68
	College-Level Courses Taken This Quarter	_____	69
	Number Passed	_____	70
	Number of other Developmental Studies courses taken this quarter.	_____	71
	Number receiving a grade of "S".	_____	72

15. Card number ___2___ 1

16. Student Identification Number _____ 2-4

17. First 2 college level English courses taken, quarter taken, and grade received.

Course 1	Course Number & Section	_____	5-9
	Year & Quarter Taken	_____	10-12
	Grade Received	_____	13
Course 2	Course Number & Section	_____	14-18
	Year & Quarter Taken	_____	19-21
	Grade Received	_____	22

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